



# Incident Command Structure Tabletop Exercise

November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014



NWS Cheyenne

NWS Riverton





# Welcome!

- Introductions

- Planners
- Evaluators
- Players

- Schedule

- Facilities

- Handout Overview

- Modules

Time	Personnel	Activity	Location
0830	All	Check-In	Wyoming Fire Academy, Riverton, WY
0900	Controllers	Welcome/Logistics	
0915	All	Module 1: Pre-Event	
1000	All	Break	
1010	All	Module 2: Severe Weather Strikes	
1140	All	LUNCH BREAK	On your own
1300	All	Module 3: Post-Event	Wyoming Fire Academy, Riverton, WY
1415	All	Break	
1430	All	Hot Wash	
1515		Evaluations / Feedback Forms	
1530		Adjourn	



# Jason's Slide

You will occasionally see some green slides like this one pop up during the exercise. If you are part of the focus group, this will be your cue to fill out your index cards.

Thank you for participating!



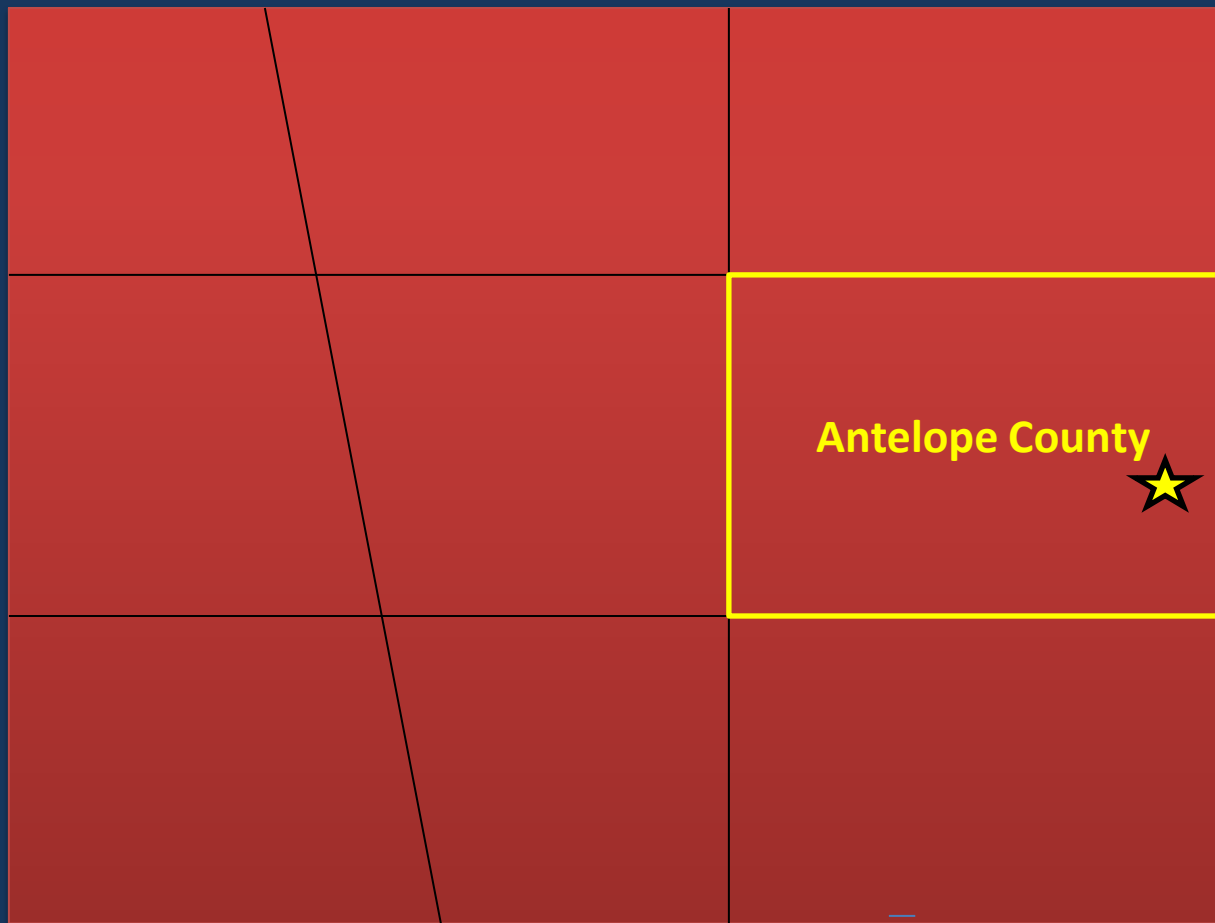
# Pre-Event Scenario Background

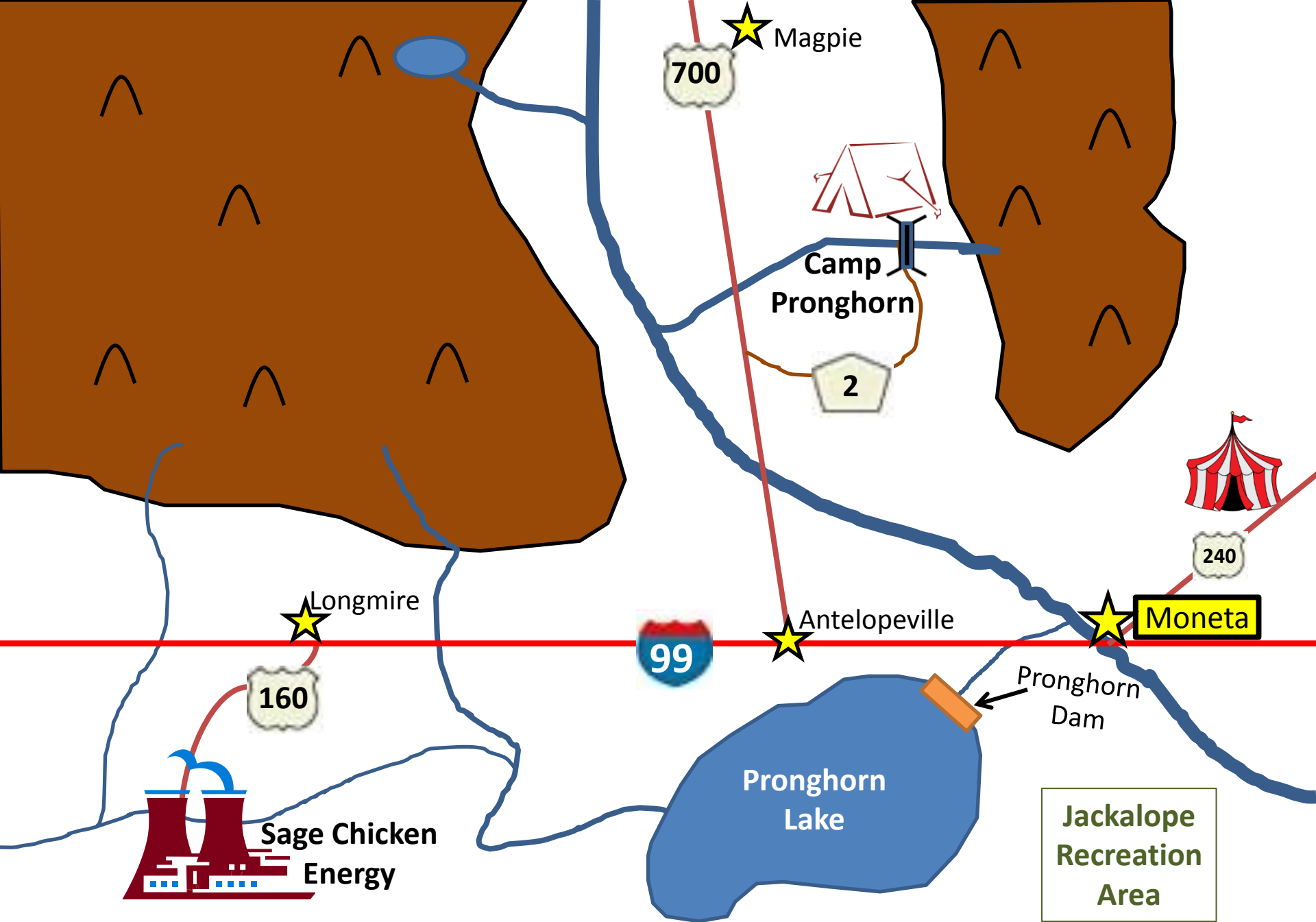
**It is 2016 and Wyoming has undergone some geopolitical boundary changes following the state legislative session....**

- Residents of Wyoming were fed up with their under-representation in their state legislature and decided to remove county boundaries and form a new state
- The new state was named Disasteria, and the county holding the state's capitol was named Antelope after state representative Anne T. Lope (R-Douglas).



# The Great State of Disasteria







# Pre-Event Scenario Background

It is the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Weekend & severe weather is anticipated to impact Antelope County in the next few days.







# Module 1:

*Pre-event*





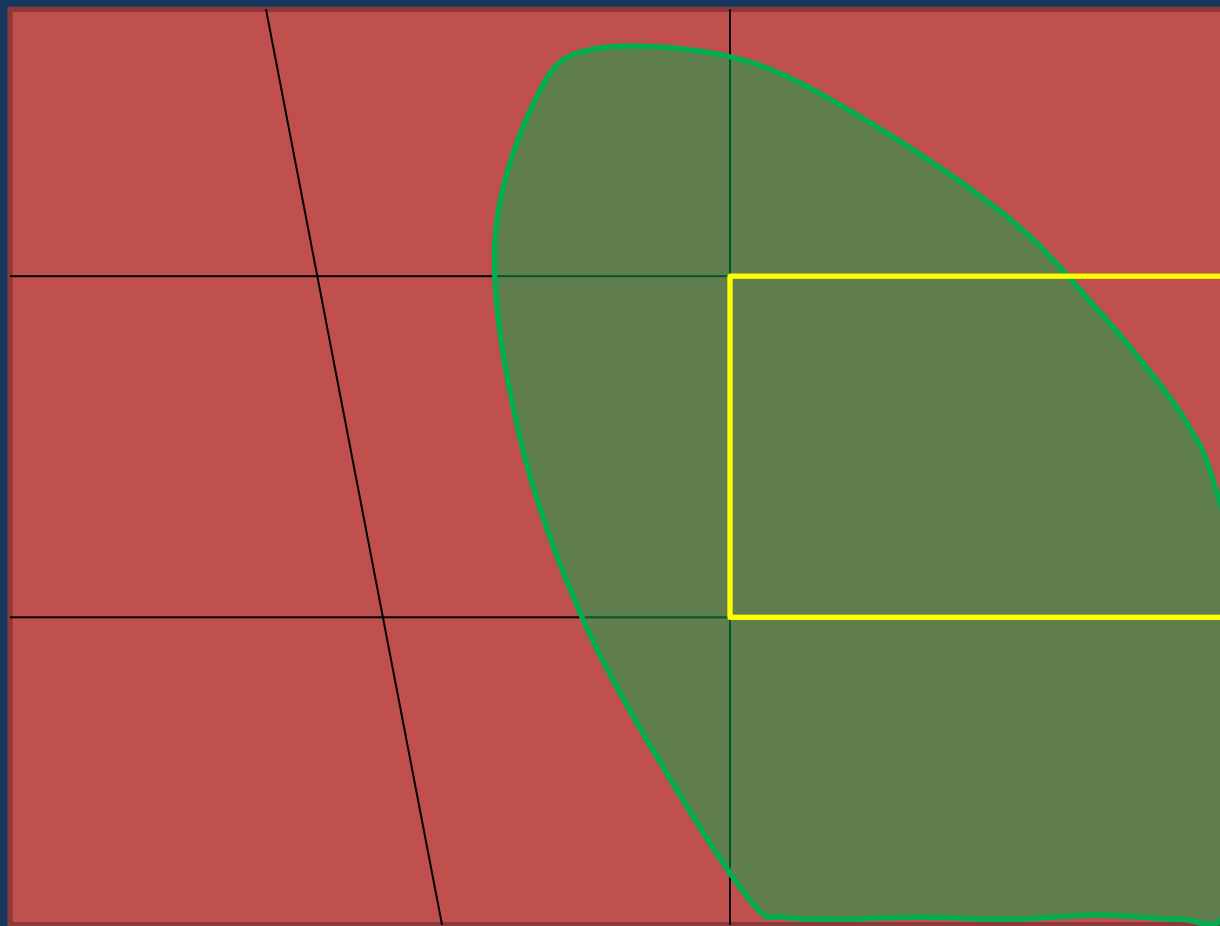
# Module 1 Goals

1. County decision makers consider upgraded severe weather risk and notify vulnerable populations
2. County decision makers consider opening an EOC in preparation for a potentially high impact weather event
3. Clarification is sought from the National Weather Service regarding forecast impacts (e.g. Conference call, Google Hangout)



# Module #1 - Pre-Event

The Storm Prediction Center's 6 AM Day 1 Convective Outlook has highlighted a large portion of Antelope County under "Slight Risk".





# Module #1 - Pre-Event

The Antelope County Fair, held in Moneta this year, will host a large outdoor concert. A sell-out crowd of 30,000 people is expected this evening.



Moneta, Wyoming  
Photograph by Venice Beske, 2011





# Module #1 - Pre-Event

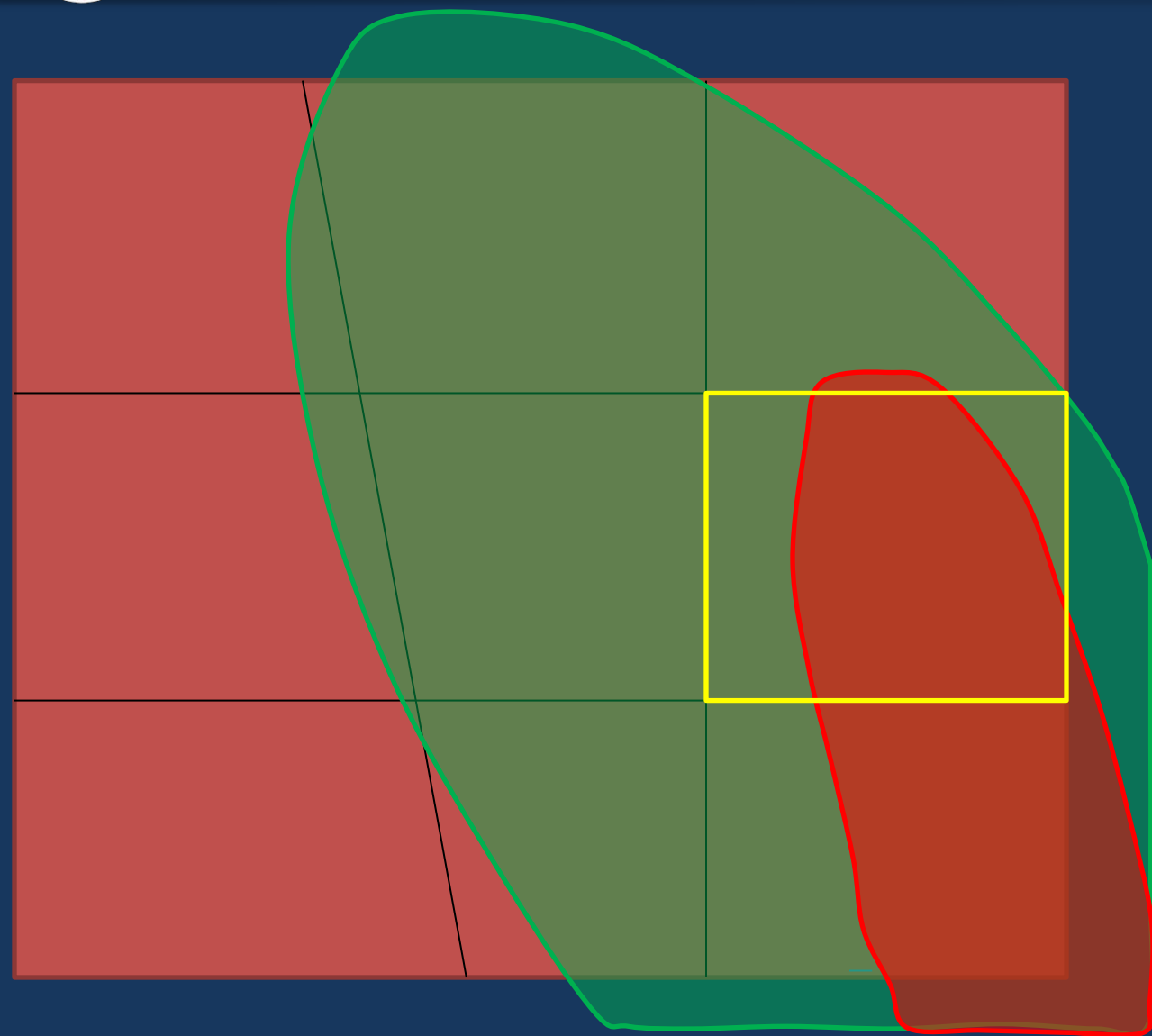
4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks are tonight in Magpie, Antelopeville, & Longmire with numerous folks vulnerable outdoors





# Module #1 - Pre-Event

Uh oh!!! The Storm Prediction Center's 1030 AM update of the Day 1 Convective Outlook has extended the severe threat west & added a moderate risk to the eastern half of the county.







# Module #1 - Pre-Event

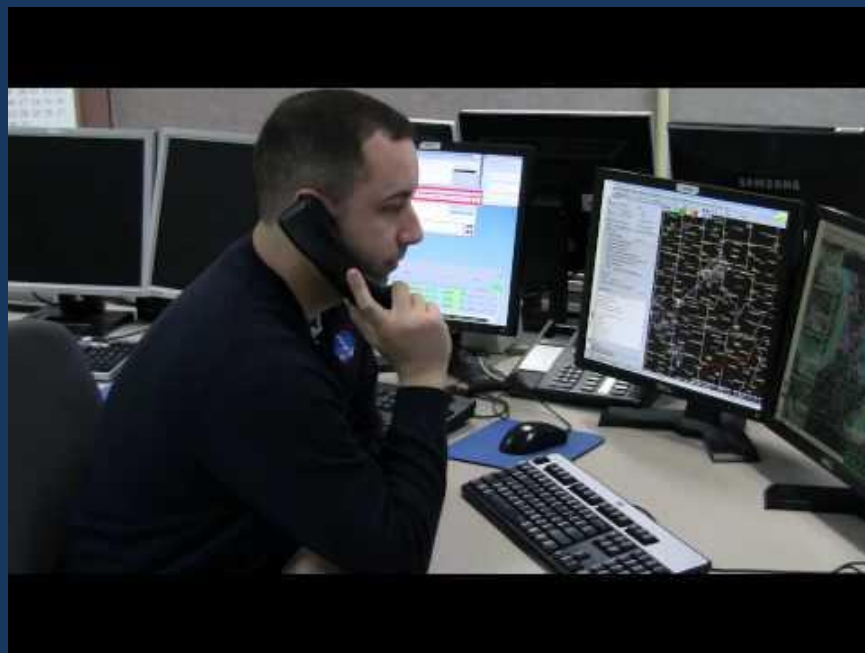
The outlook details the potential for hail up to the size of **softballs** & at least the possibility of tornadic development. It mentions this could be a “historic” event by Disasteria standards.





# Module #1 - Pre-Event

Officials from National Weather Service (NWS) make a direct phone call into the Antelope County Emergency Management (EM) & Disasteria Office of Homeland Security (DOHS) indicating the threat for large hail and significant flash flooding is increasing. Mention is made of isolated tornadoes.







# Module #1 - Pre-Event

A phone call comes into Antelope County Dispatch from Smiley Hensen, a former NWS employee turned carnie, asking if he should be scared about the expected thunderstorms later today & what was being done to “protect him from dying.”





# Module #1 - Pre-Event

You decide it is probably a good idea to get additional information from the NWS. So you head to each Disasteria NWS office's website to read their Area Forecast Discussion. However in reading the discussions, you get conflicting messages.

## Quick Access to Text Products

Area Forecast Discussion



Display



# Module #1 - Pre-Event

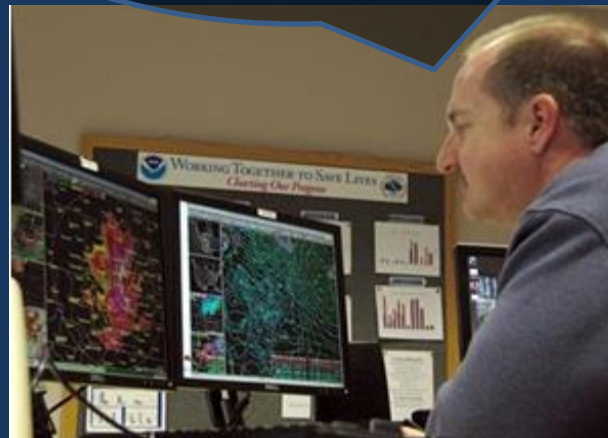
## From the Western NWS Office:

"...Overall the chances for widespread severe weather looks relatively isolated & low. Not to say its not possible, just not likely in our area..."



## From the Eastern NWS Office:

"...We're preparing for an all-hands on deck sort of day. Instability & shear parameters are incredible. Would not at all be surprised to see numerous supercells that will likely cause at least a few tornadoes..."





# Jason's Slide

If you are part of the focus group, please take this time to fill out your first card.

**Module #1 Discussion Notes:**

**What are your Concerns?**

**What would you do differently with this information yesterday?**

**Do you expect the NWS to contact you, or do you contact the NWS? If yes to either, how (NWS Chat, phone call, social media, other) and when?**

**How do you handle inconsistent messaging from the NWS offices?**



# Module #1 - Discussion

- What is your biggest concern for your agency in Antelope County at this point? Would you consider opening an EOC given this forecast?
- Does an upgrade to a moderate risk change your thinking? Does a phone call from NWS Forecasters?
- Who, if anyone, are you notifying about the forecast?
- What would you do differently if you had this information yesterday? Or a day earlier?
- What kind of additional support would you request from the State Office of Homeland Security or NWS, if any?
- How do you handle inconsistent messaging from the NWS?





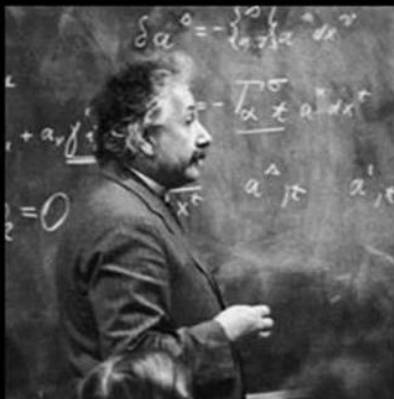


# 10 Minute Break

## Meteorologists



What society thinks I do



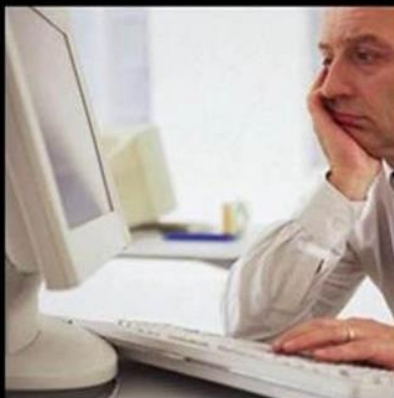
What I think I do



What my grandma thinks I do



What my friends think I do



What I actually do



What people I meet think I do



# Module 2:

*Severe Weather Strikes –  
Afternoon July 4th*





# Module 2 Goals

1. Agencies provide heads-up notification of severe weather to important partner and customer groups
2. Public alert systems, including sirens, reverse calling systems, and digital message systems, are activated to warn of hazards
3. Response teams are dispatched to impacted areas, including campground, fairgrounds, & energy field
4. Agencies develop solutions to overcome concerns and problems with WEA and EAS message systems



# Current Situation

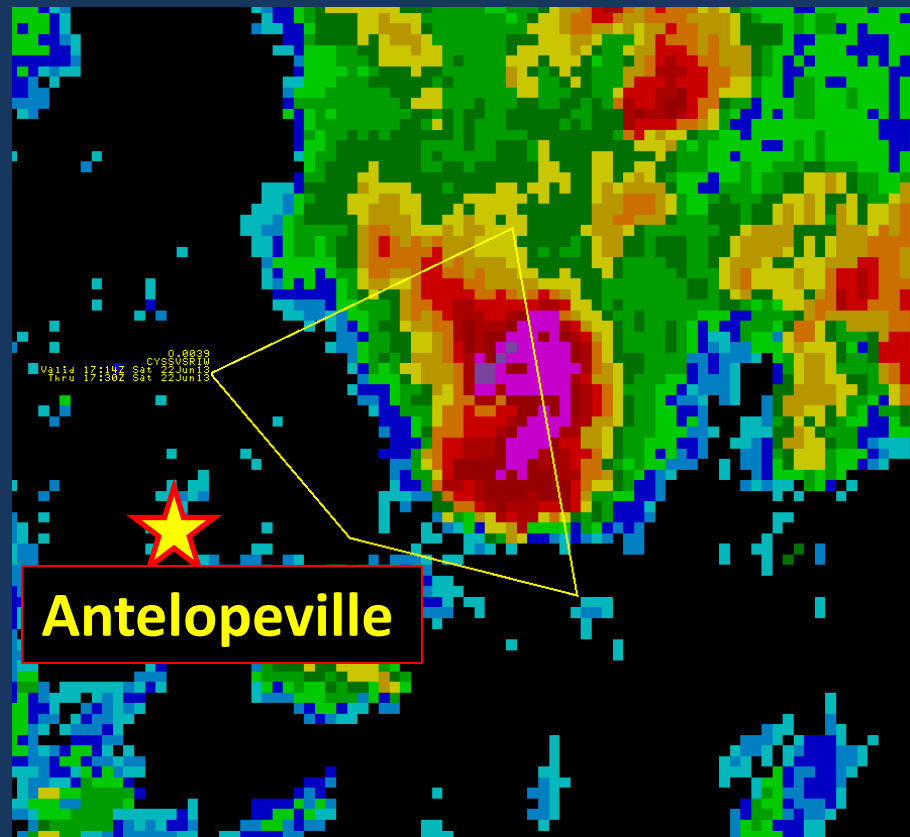
- Thunderstorms have erupted over the higher terrain
- NWS believes storms are likely to become more severe as they move over lower elevations





# Current Situation

- One particular storm is already showing signs of strengthening and may be long-lived
- Reports so far indicate small hail (less than dime size), brief heavy rain, and winds around 40 mph
- Storm is expected to impact Moneta





# NWS - Inject

- You notice on your office “summer event” list that the Antelope County Fair is taking place
- A forecaster has tickets to the concert, wife is constantly calling the office and freaking out!





# Questions

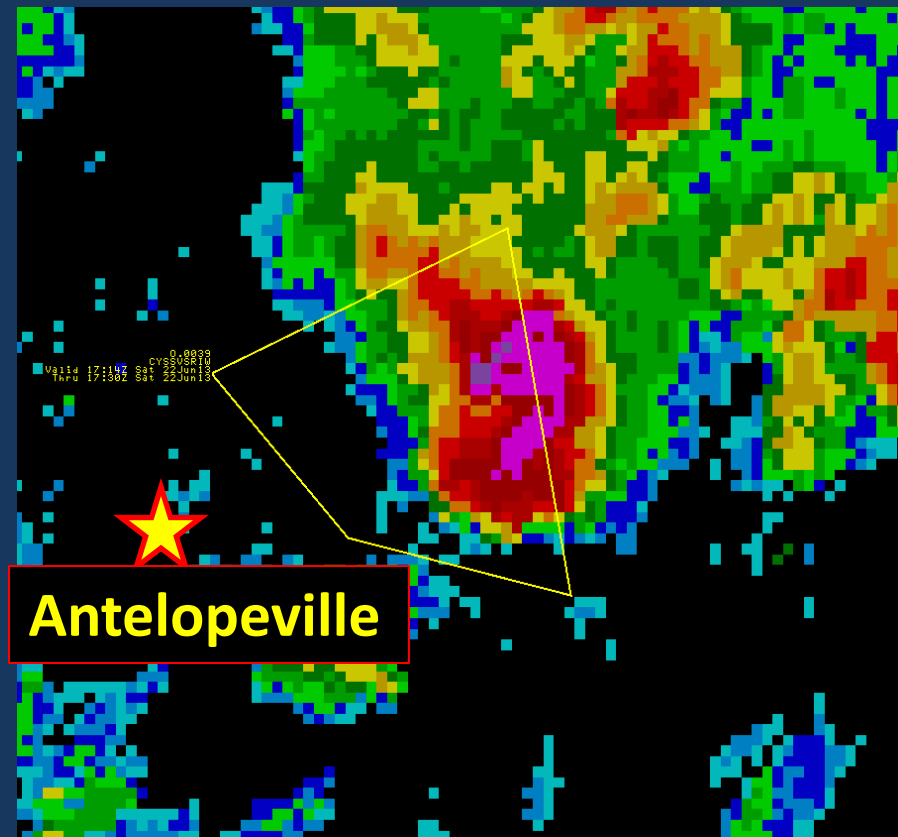
- What NWS related products do you refer to in these early stages?
- What notifications should be made to partners?
  - How does it impact operations?
  - How is it disseminated to public events?





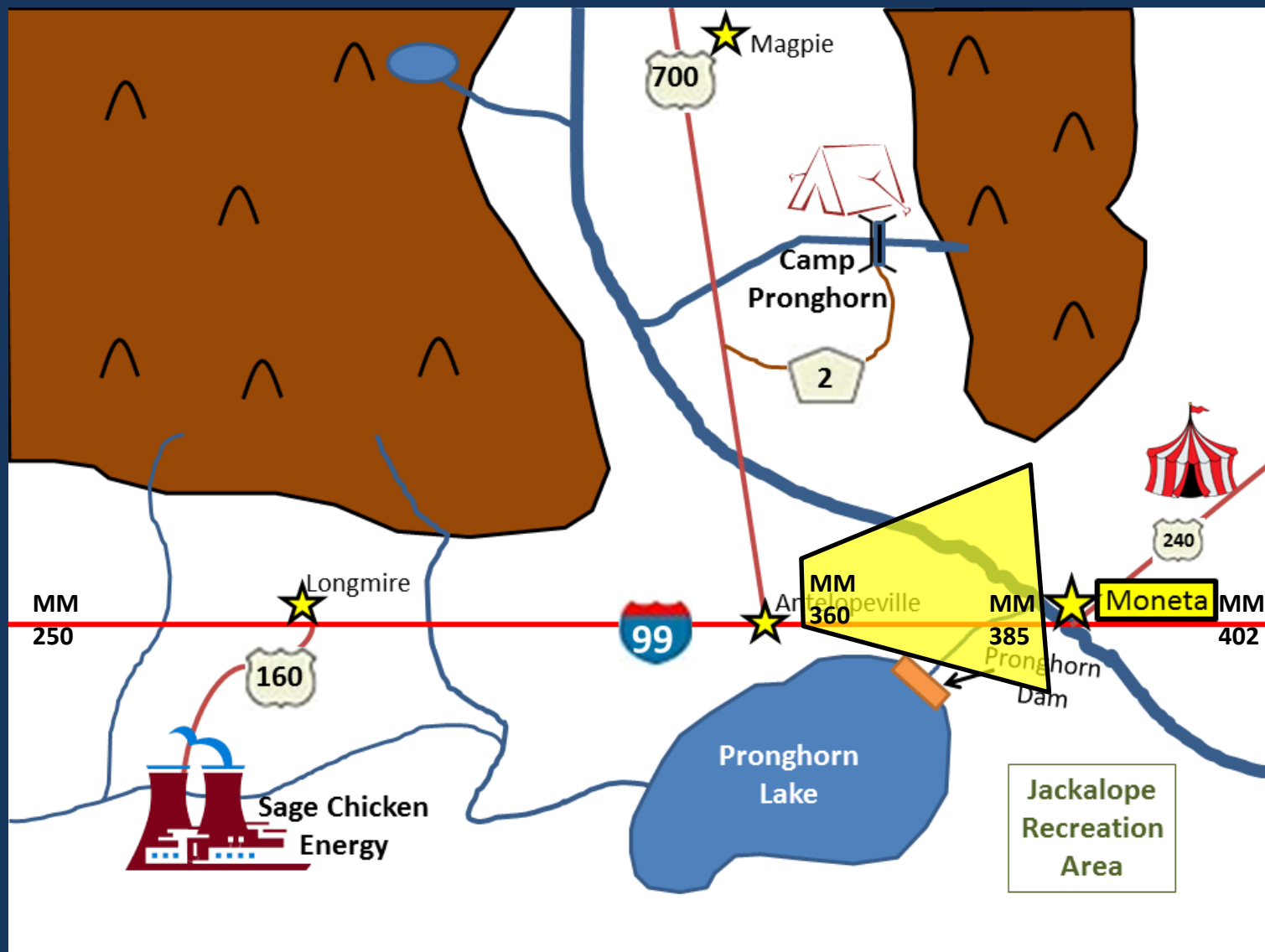
# Current Situation

- Calls start to come into the NWS office about increasing hail size; damage is occurring
- Tree branches are starting to crack due to wind
- NWS issues a **Severe Thunderstorm Warning**, stopping just shy of Moneta





# Severe Thunderstorm Warning







# Severe Weather Warning Text

BULLETIN - IMMEDIATE BROADCAST REQUESTED  
SEVERE THUNDERSTORM WARNING  
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE ARMINTO WY  
108 PM MDT MON AUG 30 2010

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN ARMINTO HAS ISSUED A

\* SEVERE THUNDERSTORM WARNING FOR...  
EAST CENTRAL ANTELOPE COUNTY IN CENTRAL WYOMING...

\* UNTIL 200 PM MDT

\* AT 106 PM MDT...A SEVERE THUNDERSTORM WAS LOCATED JUST EAST  
OF ANTELOPEVILLE...AND MOVING EAST AT 35 MPH.

HAZARD...HALF DOLLAR SIZED HAIL.

SOURCE...RADAR INDICATED.

IMPACT...DAMAGE TO VEHICLES AND CROPS IS EXPECTED.

\* THE SEVERE THUNDERSTORM WILL BE NEAR...  
INTERSTATE 99 MILEPOST 370 AROUND 130 PM MDT.  
PRONGHORN CREEK BRIDGE ON INTERSTATE 99 AROUND 145 PM MDT.

OTHER LOCATIONS IN THE WARNING INCLUDE INTERSTATE 99 BETWEEN MILEPOSTS  
360 AND 387.

PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS...

FOR YOUR PROTECTION MOVE TO AN INTERIOR ROOM ON THE LOWEST FLOOR OF A  
BUILDING.

&&

REPORT SEVERE WEATHER TO THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE OFFICE IN  
ARMINTO AT 1-800-211-1448.

LAT...LON 4409 10816 4384 10783 4355 10844 4370 10864  
TIME...MOT...LOC 1908Z 250DEG 32KT 4370 10846

TORNADO...POSSIBLE  
HAIL...1.25IN  
WIND...60MPH

\$\$

SMITH



# Dispatch Calls - Inject

- A caller from Camp Pronghorn says that strong winds have toppled trees there
- Several campers were injured during the storm, and they are in need of medical attention



- They are working on an evacuation plan for the campers



# Energy Field - Inject

- Sage Chicken Energy officials say that a lightning storm has caused damage at their field in southwest Antelope County





# Jason's Slide

If you are part of the focus group, please take this time to fill out your second card.

## Module #2 Questions 1

What NWS related products do you refer to during a severe weather outbreak?

What notifications are made to your collaborators?

How do you handle the situation once chaos begins?

Do you expect the NWS to contact you, or do you contact the NWS? If yes to either, how (NWS Chat, phone call, social media, other) and when?



# Questions

- Given what is already occurring, what is your primary concern? Why?
- What support do you expect/need from the NWS at this point?
- What about other partners?
- Who are you notifying / collaborating with at this point?





# Energy Field - Inject

Officials at Sage  
Chicken Energy report  
seeing smoke but  
don't know where its  
coming from





# Dispatch Calls - Inject

Camp Pronghorn has called back. They have evaluated their evacuation route, and the bridge has been damaged in the storm. They continue to evaluate risk. They also mention that dark clouds are moving back over the area, and ask for a quick briefing.

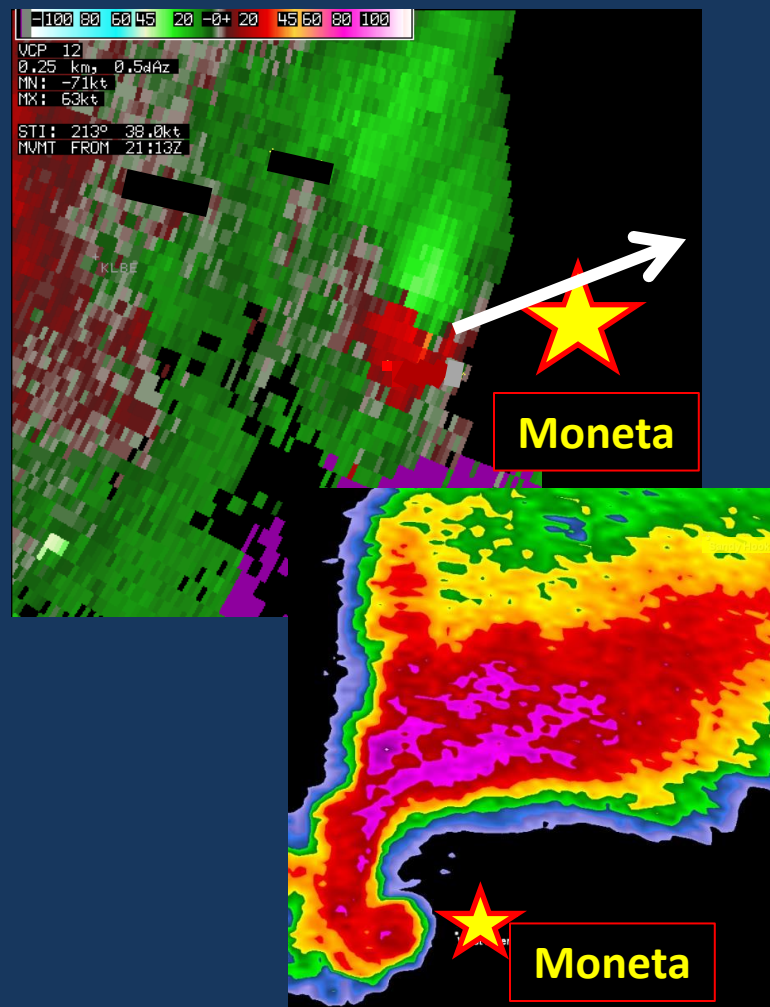






# NWS - Inject

- Storm moving toward Moneta is showing signs of rotation
- Another storm around Camp Pronghorn looks potent and may cause additional damage
- Surrounding storms are producing  $\frac{3}{4}$ " rainfall in 30 minutes





# Storm Reports

- Spotters in rural areas west of Moneta indicate the following:
  - Hail up to the size of ping pong balls
  - Blinding rain with barrow ditches running full in 30 minutes or less
  - “Lots of limbs” down and a few trees have been toppled





# Storm Reports

A spotter northeast of Moneta posted a picture on his personal Facebook page, and tagged the NWS office



**Sam "No Really" Smith**

July 4 at 12:32pm

Stormy afternoon here in Moneta! – with US National Weather Service Eastern Disasteria



Like · Comment · Share

Andy McNeel, Dan Berc, Rebecca Strothers Weiss and 29 others like this.



**Stacey Doe** Whoa! That's SOOOOO Scary!

July 4 at 12:34pm · Like



**Jared Commonsense** Dude. At least post a daytime pic if you're going to joke.

July 4 at 12:34pm · Like



**Judy Offtopic** I've heard that the gov't is going to shutdown again. Poor NWS!

July 4 at 12:35pm · Like



**Malcontent Matt** Bet those federal idiots don't have a clue.

July 4 at 12:45pm · Like



Write a comment...





# Questions

- Given what is already occurring, what is your primary concern? Why?
- How does NWS handle the rumor mill with reports?
- Who is most at risk and who is contacting them?



# Emergency Manager - Inject

- Sheriff's Deputy sends cell phone image taken from just outside the Moneta city limits west of town
- Thinks the storm is moving east



Hmph. Well, lookey there...what the devil...I better show the NWS!!



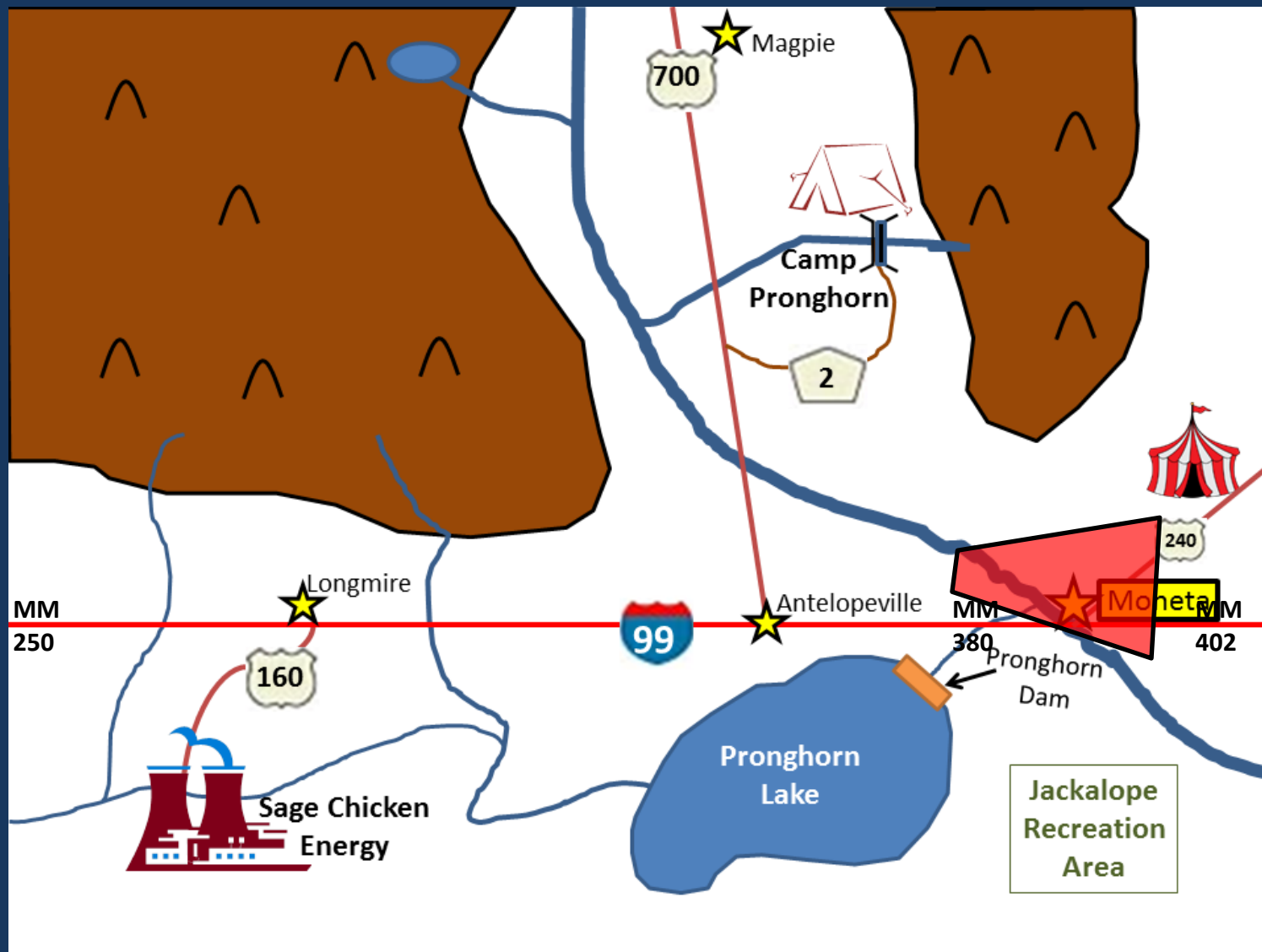


# Image taken just west of Moneta





# Tornado Warning





# Tornado Warning Text

BULLETIN - EAS ACTIVATION REQUESTED  
TORNADO WARNING  
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE ARMINTO WY  
135 PM MDT MON AUG 30 2010

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN ARMINTO HAS ISSUED A

\* TORNADO WARNING FOR...  
EAST CENTRAL ANTELOPE COUNTY IN CENTRAL WYOMING...

\* UNTIL 215 PM MDT

\* AT 133 PM MDT...A CONFIRMED TORNADO WAS LOCATED 20 MILES WEST OF  
MONETA...AND MOVING EAST AT 40 MPH.

HAZARD...DAMAGING TORNADO.

SOURCE...CONFIRMED TORNADO FROM TRAINED SPOTTERS.

IMPACT...FLYING DEBRIS WILL BE DANGEROUS TO THOSE CAUGHT WITHOUT  
SHELTER. MOBILE HOMES WILL BE DAMAGED OR DESTROYED.  
DAMAGE TO ROOFS...WINDOWS AND VEHICLES WILL OCCUR.  
TREE DAMAGE IS LIKELY.

\* THIS DANGEROUS STORM WILL BE NEAR...  
MONETA AROUND 205 PM MDT.

OTHER LOCATIONS IN THE WARNING INCLUDE INTERSTATE 99 BETWEEN MILEPOSTS  
385 AND 395.

PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS...

TAKE COVER NOW. MOVE TO AN INTERIOR ROOM ON THE LOWEST FLOOR OF A  
STURDY BUILDING. AVOID WINDOWS. IF IN A MOBILE HOME...A VEHICLE OR  
OUTDOORS...MOVE TO THE CLOSEST SUBSTANTIAL SHELTER AND PROTECT  
YOURSELF FROM FLYING DEBRIS.

&&

REPORT SEVERE WEATHER TO THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE OFFICE IN  
ARMINTO AT 1-800-211-1448.

LAT...LON 4389 10801 4366 10789 4362 10830 4379 10839  
TIME...MOT...LOC 1935Z 259DEG 36KT 4374 10822

TORNADO...OBSERVED  
HAIL...2.00IN

\$\$

BUELLER



# Jason's Slide

If you are part of the focus group, please take this time to fill out your third card.

## Module #2 Questions 2

A Tornado Warning is now issued, what type of communication do you expect with the NWS office?

Do you read through the entire warning text? What in the text stands out to you?

The warning text states that a confirmed tornado is spotted, do you believe this? If yes do you take the recommended preparedness actions?

Do you pass along this information to your collaborators or anyone else? If so how?



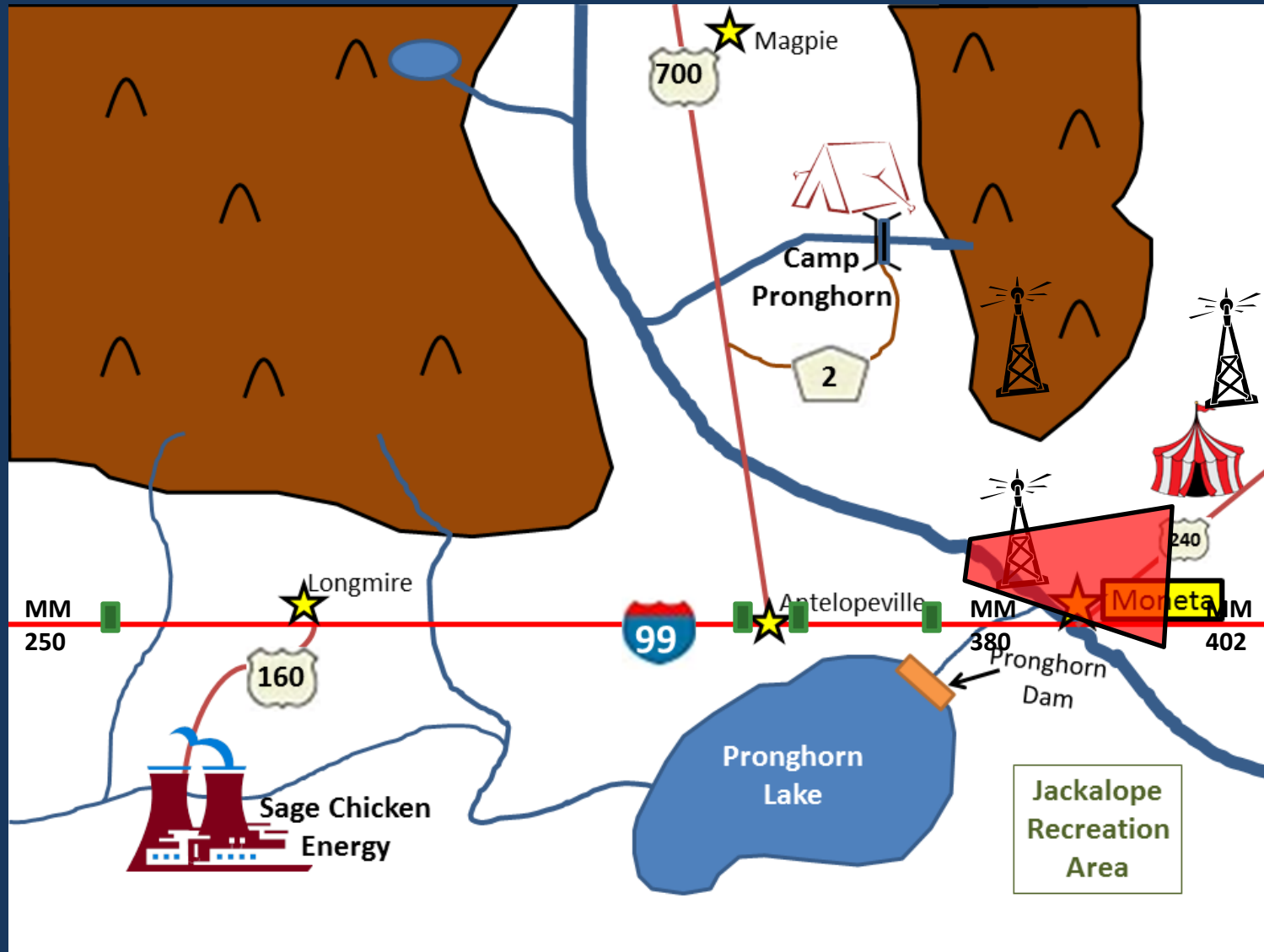
# Questions

- How does Antelope County distribute NWS warning products?
- What other partners need to be involved to ensure appropriate dissemination?





# Tornado Warning - Dissemination



Cell  
Tower



Dynamic  
Message  
Sign  
(dual-sided)





# Social Media – Facebook Inject

**Posts To Page** ✕



**Malcontent Matt** ▶ **We <3 Antelope County**  
July 4th   
Gov't Conspiracy! My phone didn't show any warning. Probably isn't one. Stupd Feds, must want me to DIE!!  
Like · Comment · Share  1

**Serious Sara** ▶ **We <3 Antelope County**  
July 4th   
I heard Camp Pronghorn got destroyed and all those babies R in dagner! Won't someone THINK OF THE CHILDREN?!?  







# Social Media – Facebook Inject

**Posts To Page** ×



**Cher Clueless**  **US National Weather Service Eastern Disasteria** ▼  
July 4th


What time does the concert start tonight? Does anyone wanna, like, sell me tickets?


[Like](#) · [Comment](#) · [Share](#) 



**Marge Fearful**  **US National Weather Service Eastern Disasteria** ▼  
July 4th

I heard the sirens. The message on the TV and Radio were GARBLED! My grandbaby is at the preschool. Is he going to die? Where is this heading?

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) · [Share](#) ·  2 

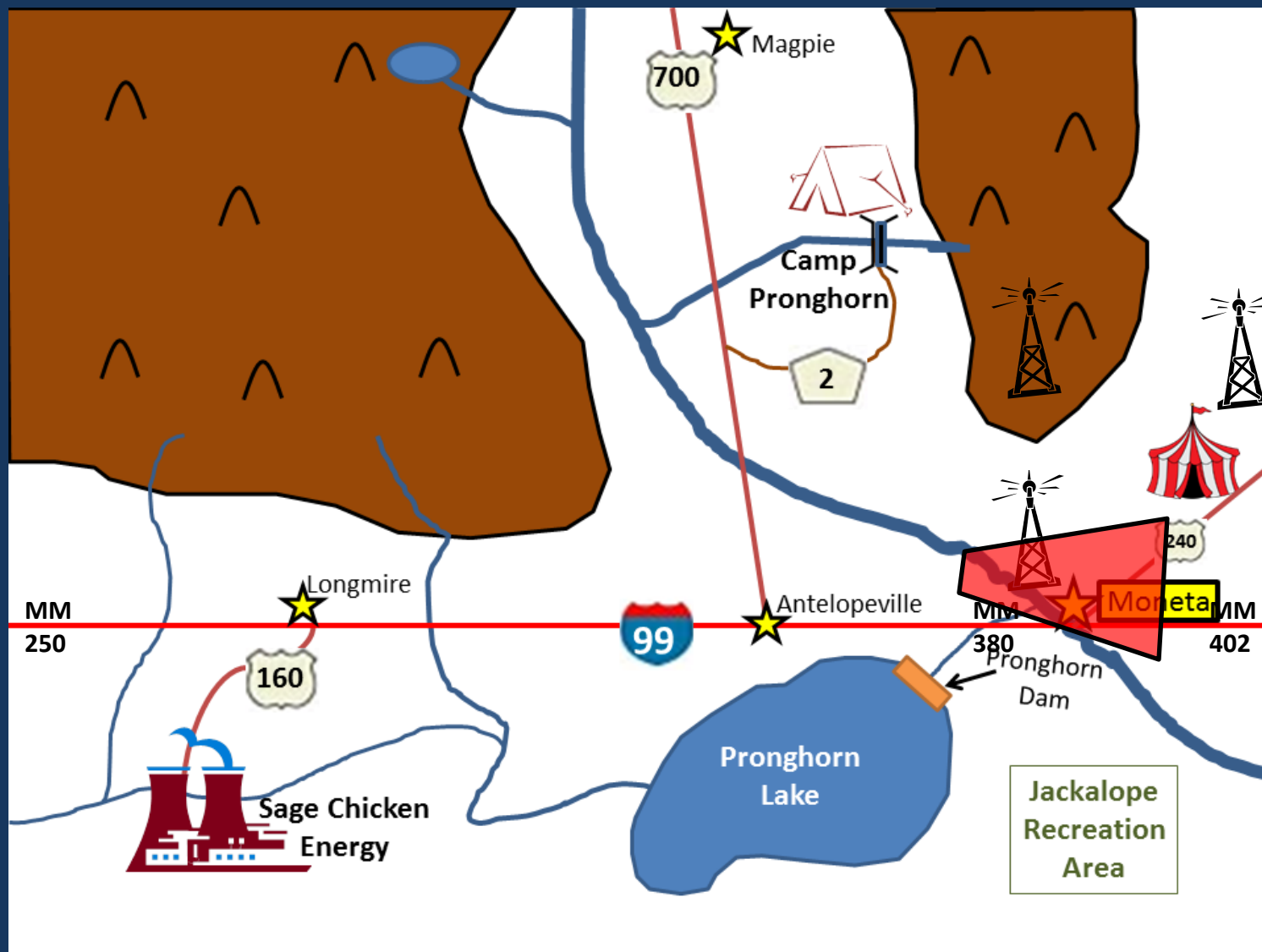
**George Anger** At least your sirens went off, ours didn't make a peep on the east side of town. My friends just on the other side of town were talking about receiving text messages about the warning. Whatever. Our tax dollars at work! Back to my desk for a nap...

**Robert Stark, Jr.** Garbled here too. Storm is impacting northern Moneta with some impressive instability parameters. Thanks for your hard work NWS, don't listen to the haters!



# Responding to WEA Complaints





# Questions

- There is a lot of confusion regarding the EAS messaging (garbled cable message, WEA, Sirens, CodeRed)
  - What is the response to these complaints?
    - What is the NWS doing about it?
    - What is the emergency services community doing about it? Do you know whom to contact at the radio station?
- In what ways might you use the Digital Message Signs on I-99?





# Jason's Slide

If you are part of the focus group, please take this time to fill out your fourth card.

## Module #2 Questions 3

Do you, or a member of your staff, monitor the NWS Social Media pages during a severe weather outbreak?

Dissemination errors in this situation abundant with the NWS taking the blame. With is your response to complaints?

What, if any, procedures do you have in place that could help limit the problems with the dissemination errors?

How are you handling things as the situation calms down? What are your other concerns?



# Panic at the Fairgrounds!

- People are sitting in their cars; some are trying to evacuate but there are traffic jams
- Others are worried about the tornado warning and are lying in ditches
- The Ferris Wheel operator fled in panic and the ride is still running
- Everyone wants to shelter in the margarita tent, among others





# Storm Damage Inject

Further inspection has revealed that the second storm has obliterated the bridge leading to Camp Pronghorn





# Social Media – Twitter Inject



Antelope County Disasteria  
DisasteriaPD.gov  
Joined December 2015

Tweet to Antelope County ...

81 Photos and videos



TWEETS 2,823 FOLLOWING 238 FOLLOWERS 6,748 FAVORITES 64

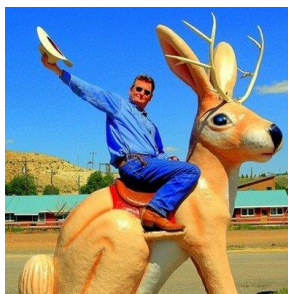
Follow

Tweets Tweets & replies Photos & videos



**Antelope Cty PD** @AntelopePD

The Sheriff in Longmire got wind of the kids at Pronghorn. He's off to save the day! #Hero



23 6

[View more photos and videos](#)

Who to follow · Refresh · View all



**John Cusack** @johncus...

Follow



**Steve Martin** @SteveMa...

Follow



**Barack Obama** @Barac...

Follow

Popular accounts · Find friends

Trends · Change

#PricelessSurprises  
Promoted by MasterCard  
Renee Zellweger  
#OscardelaRenta  
#WorldSeries





# Dispatch - Inject

- Flooded with calls reporting tornado and “lots of damage”
- Calls are coming non-stop





# Dispatch - Inject

- Sage Chicken Energy officials call to say two tanks of crude oil were ignited by the lightning
  - Each tank contained up to 1500 barrels of crude oil (1 barrel = 42 gal)
  - Some crude is leaking
- Protesters have started gathering near the plant





# Winding Down

- Radar is starting to show weakening storms
- It looks like the craziness of the day is winding down



# Additional Communication Questions

- Although the weather is calming down for the evening, how are you handling the ongoing crises at:
  - Camp Pronghorn
  - Sage Chicken Energy
  - Fairgrounds
- Who is responsible for communicating with the county fair and Camp Pronghorn staff?
  - How are you communicating with them?
  - Are county officials?
  - Can the NWS call the fair or camp (assuming there is contact info)?
- What else are you worried about? Who can help?



# Lunch Time – Back at 1:00pm







# Module 3:

*Post-event –  
Evening, July 4th*





# Module 3 Goals

1. More than one method of remote forecast and communications support is requested of the National Weather Service
2. Emergency response agencies request deployment of on-site Meteorologist
3. Methods for obtaining an aerial damage survey are discussed
4. Emergency responders develop a public communication plan to address overwhelming media requests, social media activity, and overall public information needs



# Module 3 - Background

## Tornado damaged 500 homes around Moneta





# Module 3 - Background

A second tornado or microburst took out a portion of Camp Pronghorn







# Module 3 - Background

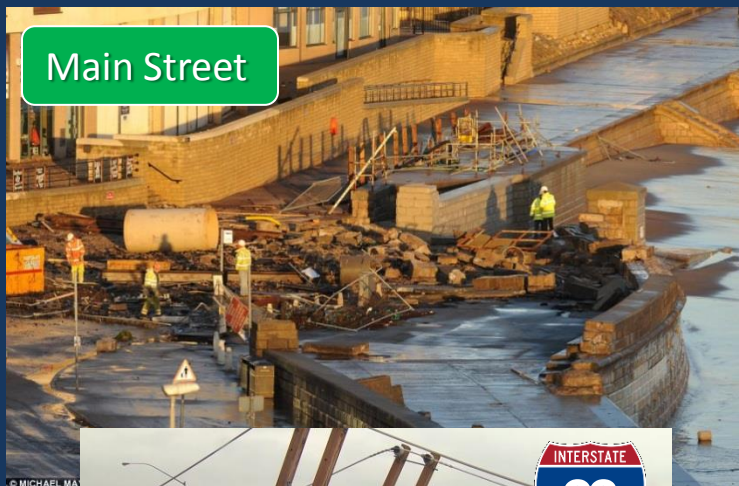
- A flood wave traveling down Pronghorn Creek took out the only bridge that connects the campground to the world
- Another flood wave is expected to arrive before sunrise





# Module 3 - Background

Debris from the tornado is blocking both Main St. (State Hwy 240) & Interstate 99, trapping thousands at the fairgrounds.



© MICHAEL MA







# Module 3 - Background

- The victims are cold and they want to go home. Some are injured.
- All hotels within walking distance of the fairgrounds are full





# Module 3 - Background

The Operations Center for Pronghorn Dam was damaged in the tornado, flow to the irrigation canal is stuck at full blast...





# Module 3 - Background

... yet a large amount of rain from the night before is causing some of the low parts of the canal to overtop, flooding fields and endangering millions of dollars worth of cattle







# Module 3 - Background

The fire at Sage Chicken Energy caused some unknown substance to leak into the creek that feeds the Jackalope Rec Area – the primary water supply for Moneta and Antelopeville





# Questions

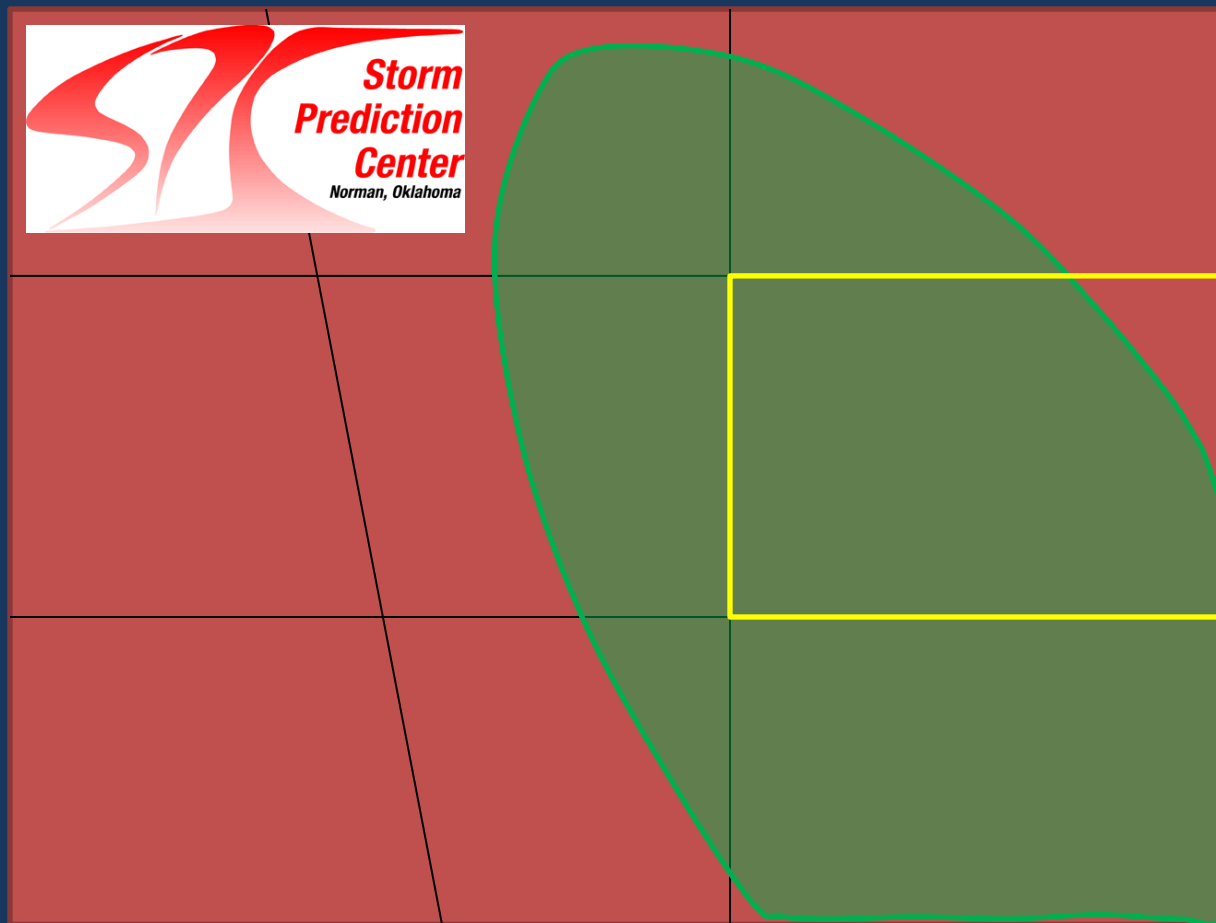
- Given this setup in your county. What would you do first to begin cleanup?
- What do you do with the cattle? The water contamination issue? Is there any way you can partner the NWS to help with this problem?
- People are asking for the location of the damage path(s) from the NWS & the OHS. Which resources can be used to determine the damage path(s)?
- What would you want to know from the NWS?
  - What kind of EAS Messages would you consider?
  - What kind of Decision Support do you think would benefit your cleanup operations?
  - How could the NWS be proactive in offering services?
  - How would the NWS begin to survey the damage?





# Module 3 - Inject

The SPC puts out a slight risk for tomorrow and again for the following day. There is a threat for more tornadoes and large hail tomorrow and a high wind threat for the following day.





# Questions

- Given this information, what would you do differently? How would this change your request(s) for the NWS?
- How are communities sheltering without homes? How much lead time do you need on lightning activity or strong winds when you have crews out in the field?



# Jason's Slide

If you are part of the focus group, please take this time to fill out your fifth card.

## Module #3 Questions 1

What would you do first to begin cleanup?

Is there any way you can partner with the NWS to help with the cleanup?

What would you want to know from the NWS, or what products are you checking?

How does the forecast for more thunderstorms change your request to the NWS during cleanup?

Amount of lead time I need when crews are in the field is...?



# Module 3 - Inject

The National Weather Service is now getting on site support requests from Emergency Management, the Sheriff's office, and from the governor





# Questions

- Given this information, what would you do differently?
- How would the National Weather Service respond?
- Given the severe weather we expect, how can the NWS meet these needs? What if we are short staffed?





# Module 3 - Inject

The national media is calling the NWS, the county Emergency Manager, and the Mayor for interviews - asking for information regarding a claim on Facebook that their aunt died at the fair and that the Mayor is denying the public their fireworks show because she hates America





# Questions

- The multiple requests for information are becoming overwhelming. Who talks to the media? What is our communications strategy?
- Who is responding to social media rumors? How is this being accomplished?



# Jason's Slide

If you are part of the focus group, please take this time to fill out your sixth card.

## Module #3 Question 2

Who talks to the media in your agency?

What is your communications strategy for this situation?

Are you monitoring and responding to social media?

Do you expect the NWS to contact you, or do you contact the NWS? If yes to either, how (NWS Chat, phone call, social media, other) and when?



# Additional Communication Questions

- What do you think our number one communication challenge would be in this situation?
- NWS: How would we staff the office, find someone to deploy, and find teams to survey the damage during peak leave season?
- Who should be the responsible party for communicating the disaster response to the public? Where should this occur? A web page? Facebook?
- How else can the NWS assist thinking of delayed impacts? This cleanup may take a while to complete, what tools could the NWS provide you with to assist you in the long run?



# Jason's Slide

If you are part of the focus group, please take this time to fill out your last card.

## Module #3 Questions 3

What do you think your number one communication challenge would be in this situation?

Who should be the responsible party for the communication the disaster response to the public?

Where should this occur (web page, social media, other)?

## Module #3 Final Thoughts

What else are you worried about?

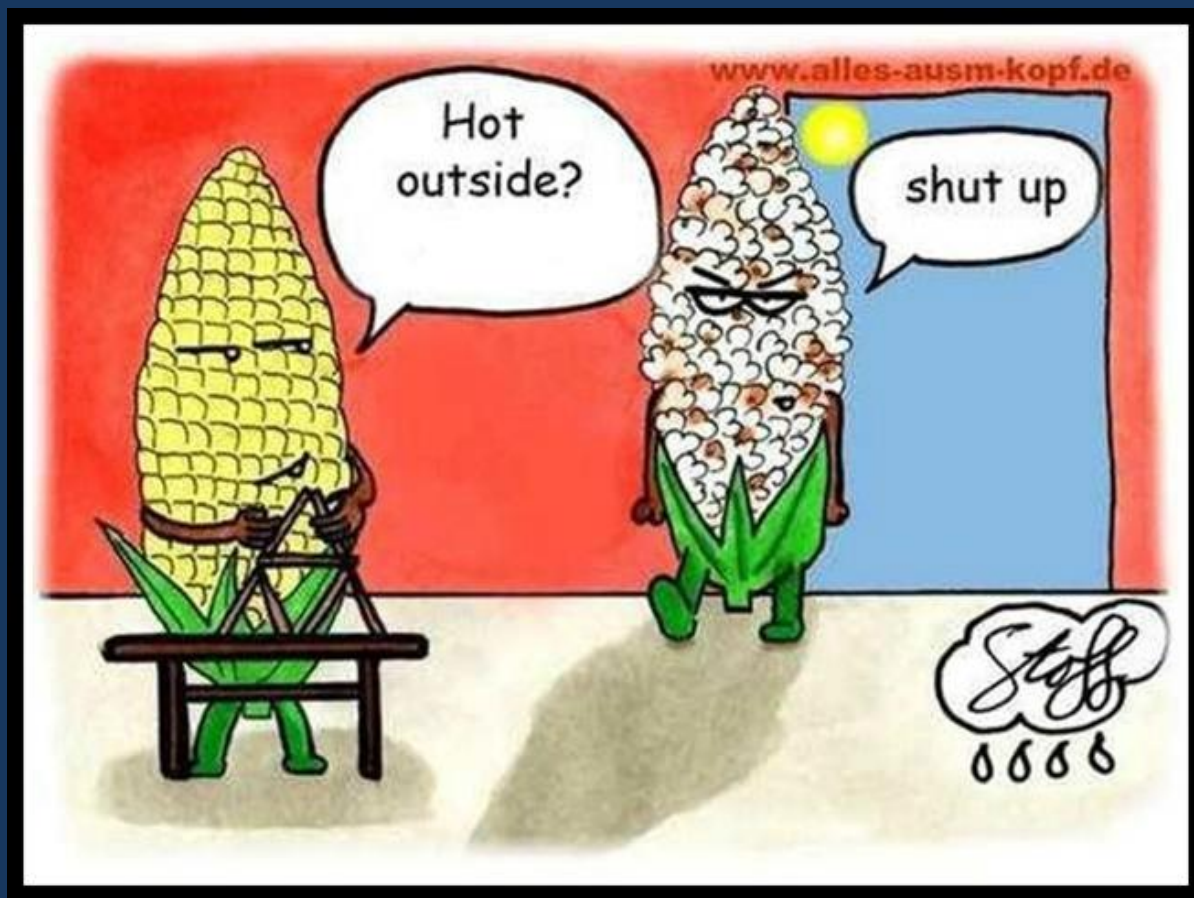
*Comments: Please write down any other comments, suggestions, or questions that may have come up during the exercise.*

Thank you for your participation





# 15 Minute Break





# Evaluations and Hot Wash

## Module 1:

1. County decision makers consider upgraded severe weather risk and notify vulnerable populations
2. County decision makers consider opening an EOC in preparation for a potentially high impact weather event
3. Clarification is sought from the National Weather Service regarding forecast impacts

## Module 2:

1. Agencies provide heads-up notification of severe weather to important partner and customer groups
2. Public alert systems, including sirens, reverse calling systems, and digital message systems, are activated to warn of hazards
3. Response teams are dispatched to impacted areas, including campground, fairgrounds, & energy field
4. Agencies develop solutions to overcome concerns and problems with WEA and EAS message systems

## Module 3:

1. More than one method of remote forecast and communications support is requested of the National Weather Service
2. Emergency response agencies request deployment of on-site Meteorologist
3. Methods for obtaining an aerial damage survey are discussed
4. Emergency responders develop a public communication plan to address overwhelming media requests, social media activity, and overall public information needs